

Michigan Women

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Michigan
Women's
Commission

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Equal Pay

Michigan women's wages continue to lag behind their male counterparts' wages. Michigan women are paid only 69.8 cents for every dollar that men are paid (US Census Bureau). Laws have been passed requiring equal pay for equal work, but more is needed.

According to the 2006 Census Bureau, on average full-time working women earned 77 cents to every dollar earned by men. According to "Behind the Pay Gap," AAUW Educational Foundation, 2007, one year

after college graduation, women are paid only 80 percent of what their male counterparts earn. Ten years after graduation, women fall further behind, earning only 69 percent of what men are paid.

Equal Pay Action in Congress

A federal law, the Equal Pay Act (EPA), requires employers to pay male and female employees equally for doing the same work. It was passed in 1963 as an amendment to the Fair Labor Standards Act and can be found at 29 U.S.C. § 206.

Currently, the following bills are introduced in the U.S. House and Senate: The Paycheck Fairness Act, sponsored by Senator Clinton and Representative DeLauro, strengthens penalties courts may impose for equal pay violations and prohibits retaliation against workers who inquire about or disclose information about employers' wage practices. The bill provides for compensatory and punitive damages, in addition to back pay, for women denied equal pay for equal work; authorizes class action equal pay

suits; and directs the U.S. Department of Labor to provide public information about strategies for identifying and eliminating wage discrimination, and to issue guidelines for evaluating jobs.

The Fair Pay Act, sponsored by Senator Harkin and Representative Norton, would prohibit wage discrimination based on sex, race and national origin by requiring employers to provide equal pay for work of equal value, whether or not the jobs are the same. The bill

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Equal Pay

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would also ban retaliation and require employers to file wage information annually with the EEOC.

The Fair Pay Restoration Act, sponsored by Senator Kennedy, reverses the U.S. Supreme Court's decision in *Ledbetter v Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co.* and helps to ensure that individuals subjected to unlawful compensation discrimination are able to assert their rights under the federal antidiscrimination laws.

Equal Pay Action in Michigan

In 1972, Michigan enacted a law to provide that an employer may not discriminate between employees on the basis of sex, thus establishing equal pay for equal work. (MCLA 408.397)

In 1978, Michigan enacted a law to prohibit employers from requiring an employee not to disclose his/her wages. (MCL 408.483a)

In 2007, Michigan legislators introduced five pieces of equal pay legislation:

SB 417 (Brater) - bill provides equal compensation for comparable worth. Assigned to the Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee.

HB 4625 (Bauer) - bill amends the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act to provide compensation equally for work of comparable value. Passed House Labor Committee and on House Floor.

HB 4626 (Byrnes) - bill amends the Penal Code to provide penalties for violating comparable worth. Passed House Labor Committee and on House Floor.

HB 4627 (K. Law) - bill creates a Commission on Pay Equity. Passed House and in the Senate Commerce and Tourism Committee.

HB 5136 (Miller) – bill amends the penal code to establish penalties for discriminating in the payment of wages between sexes similarly employed. Assigned to the House Labor Committee.

What you can do:

Contact your member of the Michigan House of Representatives or Senate to advocate on behalf of this legislation. To find your legislator go to www.legislature.mi.gov.

Sources: AAUW Educational Foundation
WomenWork!
NOW
National Committee on Pay Equity
Institute for Women's Policy Research

Did You Know That:

- of the Fortune 500 companies, only 9 have women CEO's?
- over the course of a lifetime of work, the average 25 year old working woman in the U.S. is going to lose about \$455,000 to unequal pay?
- it takes until Tuesday each week for a woman's wages to catch up to a man's wages from the previous week?
- in a recent survey, the average female accountant makes \$85,300 while the average male accountant makes \$119,300; female lawyers average \$73,500 to male lawyers' average of \$84,200?
- in Michigan maids/housekeepers earn an average of \$18,120 annually while janitors/custodians earn \$23,210?
- half of all women with income from a pension in 2002 received less than \$5,600, compared with \$10,340 per year for men?
- job loss, divorce, or death of a spouse can plunge a previously middle-class woman into poverty?*

**See www.cew.umich.edu for references to these statistics.*

Preventing Unintended Pregnancy

A new clinical guideline for preventing unintended pregnancy in adults has been jointly developed and released by a statewide 40-member Provider Task Force as part of the Governor's Blueprint for Preventing Unintended Pregnancies, in collaboration with the Michigan Quality Improvement Consortium (MQIC).

The guideline provides tips for doctors and other providers when counseling patients on their plans to prevent an unplanned or unwanted pregnancy. Patient and provider education materials are also included. The guideline was developed from several evidence-based sources, including 2006 Centers of Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recommendations.

The new clinical guideline is available at www.mqic.org. Patient and provider education tools are downloadable at www.michigan.gov/mdcr and clicking on "Michigan's First Surgeon General."

NEW BOOSTER SEAT LAW

On March 27, 2008, Governor Jennifer M. Granholm signed PA 43 Of 2008, legislation sponsored by Senator Michelle McManus and others, and supported by the Safe Kids and Boost MI Kids coalition. The law will require the use of approved booster seats for children who are between the ages of four and eight and less than 4 feet 9 inches tall. The law takes effect July 1.

Current law requires children under age four to ride in an infant or child

car seat. The new law extends the requirement to include older children who also are not optimally protected by seat belts alone.

Partners for Child Passenger Safety (PCPS) conducts the world's largest ongoing study of children in crashes and analyzes actual crash data from 16 states, including Michigan. PCPS reports that the risk of injury for a 4 to 8 year-old child is reduced by 59 percent when using a car seat or booster seat. Children in

seat belts alone are four times more likely to suffer head/brain injuries as compared to those in booster seats. States that have passed similar laws also have determined that child restraint use increases dramatically when required by law.

The Governor also urged the Legislature to take quick action on a bill that will make it possible to make free booster seats available to low income families.



Pregnant Women & Seat Belts

The Michigan Office of Highway Safety and the Michigan Department of Community Health have partnered to highlight the importance of pregnant women wearing a seat belt to prevent death and injury.

In Michigan, an average of 4 out of 10 pregnant or new mothers who are not wearing a safety belt die in traffic crashes each year.

Experts recommend that pregnant women wear seat belts and leave the air bag switch on because they work

together to protect in a crash. They also recommend adjusting the seat as far as back as possible. The breastbone should be at least 10 inches from the steering wheel or dashboard. As the abdomen grows during pregnancy, move the seat back to keep as much distance as possible while still allowing a driver to reach the pedals.

Brochures are available free of charge by calling (517) 333-2722 or via e-mail at trafficsafety@michigan.gov.

**“What’s the
right way
to wear my
seat belt?”**

**NEVER place the
lap belt above or
on your belly.**

Place the
shoulder
belt across
your chest
(between your
breasts) and
away from
your neck.



Never place
the shoulder
belt behind your
back or under
your arm.

Adjust the lap belt across
your hips/pelvis and below
your belly.

PROGRAMS TO HELP CITIZENS THREATENED WITH MORTGAGE FORECLOSURE



The Governor and Legislature have established two new refinancing options to protect home ownership – an adjustable rate mortgage (ARM) refinancing option that will help citizens get into fixed-rate mortgages and a “rescue” program that helps those who have been behind in their payments in the past, but are current now. The new tools are part of the “Save the Dream” initiative that makes housing counselors available to homeowners and raises awareness about avoiding foreclosure. The Save the Dream products and programs are operated and funded entirely by the Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA).

The new Save the Dream tools are:

- **The Adjustable Rate Mortgage (ARM) Refinance Program** that will assist homeowners who have an ARM in refinancing to a 30-year, lower-interest, fixed-rate conventional loan;
- **The Rescue Refinance Program** that will assist individuals who have a delinquency on their mortgage and who are at risk of losing their home will have a chance to get into a more affordable 30-year, fixed rate, conventional loan.

For more details on the Save the Dream refinance programs and other services, go to www.michigan.gov/mshda and click the Save the Dream icon where up-to-date information about the loans, services, and MSHDA-approved lenders and certified counselors is available. There is also a consumer hotline that helps callers find a counselor locally. **That toll-free number is 1-866-946-7432.**

May is National Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month

What I can do to prevent osteoporosis?

- By age 20, the average woman has acquired 98% of her skeletal mass. This means that the best way to prevent osteoporosis is to build strong bones during childhood and adolescence.
- Follow a balanced diet rich in calcium and vitamin D.
- Engage in regular physical activity, including weight-bearing and resistance training exercises.
- Limit alcohol intake and do not smoke.
- Have a BMD test and take preventative medication when appropriate.
- Talk with your doctor about your bone health and your risk for osteoporosis.
- Maintain a healthy body weight throughout your life.
- Protect yourself from falls.

For more information go to www.osteoporosis.org



GRADING THE STATES – 2008

On March 3, Governor Jennifer M. Granholm expressed appreciation to the Pew Center on the States and *Governing* magazine for recognizing Michigan as an outstanding leader in the Government Performance Project (GPP) report entitled, “Grading the States 2008.”



“Year-in, year-out we want to ensure that we are spending tax dollars efficiently and in a way that provides the service citizens need and depend upon,” Granholm said. “We appreciate the recognition from Pew and *Governing* magazine that even in tight budget times, we have made improvements in the way we operate state government.”

Michigan received the highest score of any Midwestern state and scored higher in three out of four categories judged by the nationwide report card in 2005. Michigan received high marks in the area of information, infrastructure, and people and fell only slightly in the money area, which evaluates states’ budgets. Only Utah, Virginia, and Washington scored higher than Michigan; all received an A-. In addition to the state of Michigan, only Delaware, Georgia, Missouri, and Texas received a B+.

“Michigan is a very good example of a state that has been well managed in the toughest of economic circumstances,” said Susan Urahn, managing director of the Pew Center on the States, of which the GPP is a part. “The governor has not, as she says, ‘wasted the opportunity of a crisis.’ Michigan has used a strategic, statewide plan to ensure that the state’s critical work for the public gets done - in spite of a battered manufacturing sector that has affected state revenue.”

Pew and *Governing* found that Michigan demonstrated an improvement in its strategic workforce planning, project monitoring, performance auditing and evaluation, and its online service and information. In fact, the report credits Michigan’s state website - www.michigan.gov - as a national model for the way it allows citizens and businesses to perform a variety of transactions that save the state money.

The conclusions in the report are based on research released by the Pew Center on the States Government Performance Project, the nation’s only comprehensive, independent analysis of how well each state government is managed and actually performs. This is the fourth time the project has graded the states. The project is operated by The Pew Charitable Trusts and is a partnership with *Governing* magazine.



Governor Jennifer M. Granholm and MWC Vice Chair Gloria Woods welcome people to the Michigan Women’s Commission’s Women’s History Month Reception on March 12, 2008.

MWC Meeting

At the March 12 meeting of the Michigan Women’s Commission, members hosted a reception to highlight Women’s History Month.

The Commission voted to support passage of SB 162 (Senator Irma Clark-Coleman) and HB 4662 (Representative Virgil Smith), the bills to require all-day mandatory kindergarten.

The Commission also heard presentations from Judy Samelson, Chief Executive Officer, the Early Childhood Investment Corporation and Jane Zehnder-Merrell, Senior Research Associate, Michigan League for Human Services, on *2007 Kids Count in Michigan*.

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CALENDAR

May is National Osteoporosis Awareness and Prevention Month.

See www.nof.org and <http://www.michiganosteoporosisconnection.org/>

May is also National Teenage Pregnancy Prevention Awareness Month. See www.teenpregnancy.org

May 7 – The Women's Commission for Oakland County holds its first Public Forum from 4 p.m. to 7 p.m. at the Oakland County Board of Commissioners' Auditorium, 1200 N. Telegraph Road, Pontiac, MI 48341-0470.

May 11 – Mother's Day

May 19 – MWC Legislative Committee Meeting

May 30 - June 1 – Lansing, Michigan Go Run, The White House Project. Go Run is a weekend-long training to equipping women with skills to run for elected office. See <http://www.thewhitehouseproject.org/>

June 11, 5:30 p.m. – Lansing, Michigan Women's Historical Center Picnic on the Lawn celebrating the 25th anniversary, with raffles, music and meal. See www.michiganwomenshalloffame.org/pages/june.htm

June 11, 10:00 a.m. – Lansing, 110 W. Michigan Ave. Michigan Women's Commission meeting, Call (517) 373-2884

August 26 – Women's Equality Day

For a complete calendar go to www.michigan.gov/mdcr - women's commission.

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